

FOR PUBLIC USE

Qs and As for Changes Effective on February 1, 2008

The Passport Card

Q: What is the passport card?

A: The passport card is a wallet-size card that can only be used for land and sea travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. The card will provide a less expensive, smaller, and more convenient alternative to the passport book for those who travel frequently to these destinations by land or by sea.

Q: Why can't I use the passport card to fly to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, or Bermuda?

A: The passport card is designed for the specific needs of the northern and southern border resident communities and is not a globally interoperable travel document as is the traditional passport book. While the passport card has limited use, the passport book will remain the premier internationally accepted travel document.

Q: Didn't Congress just pass a law delaying passport requirements for land border crossings and sea travel until June 2009?

A: Questions about the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) must be referred to the Department of Homeland Security, which is the federal agency charged with deciding and implementing the documentary requirements. Our role in WHTI is to produce passport books and passport cards for international travel. Please check the Department of Homeland Security website at <http://www.dhs.gov/xtrvlsec/crossingborders/index.shtm> for the latest information on travel document requirements.

Q: Does the passport card contain an electronic chip?

A: To facilitate the frequent travel of Americans living in border communities, and to meet the Department of Homeland Security's operational needs along the land borders, the passport card will have a vicinity-read radio frequency identification (RFID) chip. With this technology, Customs and Border Protection inspectors will be able to access photographs and other biographical information stored in secure government databases before the traveler reaches the inspection station.

Q: Won't this chip violate Americans' privacy?

A: There will be no personal information written on the electronic chip itself. The chip will have only a unique number linking the card to a stored record contained in secure government databases.

Q: How secure is the card?

A: The Department has decided to use laser engraving and will include state-of-the-art security features to mitigate against the possibility of counterfeiting and forgery. In addition, to mitigate any possibility that the card could be tracked, it will be issued with a protective sleeve that will prevent the card from being read when not in use.

We are taking every care to ensure that this passport card is as secure as current technology permits. There will be no personal information written to the RFID chip.

Q: What is RFID Technology?

A: Radio Frequency Identification technology (RFID) has been used successfully along our land borders with Canada and Mexico since 1995 in the Department of Homeland Security's trusted traveler programs, such as NEXUS, SENTRI and FAST. U.S. border officials are able to expedite legitimate cross-border travel and trade of those trusted travelers who carry

membership cards with vicinity read RFID chips that link to government databases. Membership in these programs currently exceeds 400,000.

RFID technology has been commercially available in one form or another since the 1970s. It can be found in car keys, highway toll tags, bank cards and security access cards. The Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers, who staff the ports of entry, anticipate that the speed of vicinity RFID will allow CBP officers, in advance of the traveler's arrival at the inspection booth, to quickly access information on the traveler from secure government databases, and allow for automated terrorist watch list checks without impeding traffic flow. In addition, they foresee that multiple cards can be read at a distance and simultaneously, allowing an entire car of people to be processed at once.

The RFID technology embedded in documents will not include any personally identifying information; only a unique number that can be associated with a record stored in a secure government database will be transmitted.

Q: When will the passport card be available?

A: We anticipate that the passport card will be available sometime in the spring of 2008. However, beginning February 1, U.S. citizens will be able to apply in advance for their passport cards.

At this time, we cannot give a specific date as to when production will begin on the passport card. We will continually update our website, <http://travel.state.gov>, with information on the production start date.

Q: Why are you accepting applications for the passport card before it is being produced?

A: We are aware that some Americans, particularly along the borders, will want to have the passport card as soon as it is available. For those customers, we want to give them the opportunity to apply for it in advance.

Q: Where do I apply for a passport card?

A: First time applicants can apply at any one of our 9,300 Passport Application Acceptance Facilities across the country. Applicants can locate a facility nearest to them by checking our website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Q: Can I apply for the passport card and passport book at the same time using the same application?

A: Yes.

Q: What documents will I need in order to apply for a passport card?

A: The passport card is a fully valid passport that attests to the U.S. citizenship and identity of the bearer. As such, the passport card is adjudicated to the exact standards as the passport book. Applicants must provide documents which attest to their U.S. citizenship and identity such as birth and naturalization certificates.

First time adult and minor applicants under the age of 16 will need to submit a completed Form DS-11 "Application for a U.S. Passport", 2 photos, evidence of citizenship, the application fee for the passport card and the execution fee. These applicants must apply in person at a Passport Application Acceptance Facility.

Adult applicants with fully-valid passports can apply for the passport card by mail by submitting Form DS-82 "Application for a U.S. Passport By Mail", 2 photos, fully valid passport issued within the last fifteen years, and the passport card application fee. Please check our website, <http://travel.state.gov> for complete details on applying for the passport card.

Q: How much will the passport card cost?

A: For first time applicants, the passport card will cost \$45 for adults and \$35 for children under the age of 16, which includes the execution fee of \$25. Adults with fully-valid passports issued within the last fifteen years can apply for the card by mail using Form DS-82, at a cost of \$20.

Q: Why is there an execution fee for the passport book and passport card?

A: First time applicants, minors, and those seeking to replace a lost or stolen passport must appear in person before a person authorized by the Secretary of State to give oaths to verify their passport applications. In order to offer American citizens convenient locations to apply for a passport, the Department of State authorizes Passport Acceptance Agents to accept passport applications on its behalf. The execution fee is to reimburse the acceptance facility for the cost of the service, which provides an incentive for them to act on behalf of the Department of State. Effective February 1, 2008, the execution fee per application will be reduced from \$30 to \$25. Applicants applying for both the passport book and card simultaneously pay only one execution fee.

Q: How did the Department of State decide on the cost of the passport card?

A: Our fees reflect the cost of providing passport services to the American public. Per regulation, the Department of State employs an independent consultant to conduct periodic and regular cost of service studies to determine the cost of providing consular services. The cost of service study indicated that the Department could issue a passport card at \$20 for an adult and \$10 for a child. With the execution fee of \$25, the total cost for an adult is \$45 or 37.5 cents per month over a ten year period.

Q: How long will it take to receive a passport card?

A: Once the passport card is being produced, the processing and issuance time will be the same as for the passport book. For instance, the current turnaround time for routine service passports is 4 to 6 weeks. Up-to-date processing times are located at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Q: Can an applicant request the \$60 expedited service for the passport card?

A: Expedited service is not available for the passport card at this time. Once we begin producing the passport card, we anticipate being able to offer applicants expedited service.

Q: Can an applicant request overnight return delivery service for the passport card?

A: Neither overnight return delivery service nor Priority Mail service will be available for the passport card. Passport cards will be mailed to applicants using First Class Mail service.

Q: Will the payment of one \$60 expedite fee serve to expedite both the passport book and passport card, if applied for at the same time?

A: Currently the passport card is not in production. Once the passport card is in production then only one \$60 expedite fee for the passport card and passport book will be collected if applied for at the same time. If the passport card and passport book are applied for at different times, the applicant would need to pay separate \$60 expedite fees if requested.

Q: If an applicant already has a fully-valid adult passport book issued within the last fifteen years, what form should be used to apply for a passport card?

A: The applicant can apply for the passport card using either Form DS-82 or Form DS-11. If the applicant chooses to apply using a DS-82, he/she must submit, along with the application, the fully valid passport issued within the last fifteen years, 2 passport photos, and payment to the Department of State in the amount of \$20.

If the applicant chooses to apply using a DS-11, he/she must submit a completed Form DS-11 "Application for a U.S. Passport", 2 photos, evidence of citizenship, the application fee for the passport card and the execution fee. These applicants must apply in person at a Passport Application Acceptance Facility. This may be preferable to the applicant if he/she has frequent international travel requiring the use of the passport book.

Q: How many photos are required when applying for the passport card?

A: Two photos are required, same as for a passport book.

Q: How many photos are required when applying for both the passport book and passport card?

A: Two photos are required.

Q: Can the passport card be used to apply for passport book?

A: Yes.

Passport Forms and Passport Book Fees

Q: When will the new passport forms be posted on the website?

A: February 1, 2008.

Q: What are the new fees for the passport book?

A: First time adult applicants must pay the \$75 passport book application fee and a \$25 execution fee, for a total of \$100.

Minor applicants under the age of 16 must pay the \$60 passport book application fee and a \$25 execution fee, for a total of \$85.

Adult applicants applying to renew their passport must pay the \$75 passport book application fee. No execution fee is collected for renewal applications.